

J-Term 2005
Faith, Labor, and Economic Life

January-Term: 36 class hours, spread over two week, January 2005

Class Location: Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1100 E. 55th St., Room 303

Dates:	Times:
Jan. 3 – 7	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Jan. 10-14	No Class
Jan. 17	MLK Day – No Class
Jan. 18-21	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Office Hours: Faculty will be in LSTC Refectory, 1100 E. 55th St., between 7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. on class days. *Other times by appointment.*

Jointly taught by: Professor Richard J. Perry, Jr., Lutheran School of Theology
rperry@lstc.edu, 773-256-0677
Professor Kazi Joshua, North Park Seminary
kjoshua@northpark.edu, 773-244-5288
Professor Mark Wendorf, McCormick Seminary
mwendorf@mccormick.edu, 708 763 9540
Ms. Kim Bobo, National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice
kbobo@nicwj.org, 773-728-8400

Course Description: Students will learn about ministry with workers and how to engage with congregants about theological, Biblical and ethical implications in the workplace, while offering experiential education opportunities for students to engage in dialogue with low-wage workers who struggle to survive in today's economy.

Background/Assumptions: Most Christians spend more time at work than they spend with their families, and certainly more time than they spend at Church. The average U.S. worker spends 54 hours at work. Despite this dominance of work in our lives, few pastors talk about the Scriptural teachings on work, feel equipped to help congregants be just workers and just employers, or engage their congregants in advocacy for just working conditions.

Course Objectives: During the course, each student will gain:

- * Mission and social analysis tools for addressing critical social and religious issues around work.
- * Theological understandings about Biblical and denominational approaches to work and economic life.
- * Educational experiences on worker justice issues that help students understand low-wage and immigrant workers and the role of the church in challenging unjust practices.

- * A general understanding of the economic trends in the society and the impact on workers.
- * Skills in creating congregational resources around economic justice issues.
- * Elementary skills in community, labor and congregational based organizing.
- * Skills to build relationships across lines of race and class.

The Class will Include:

- * Overview of what the Scriptures say about work and economic life
- * Research and overview of denominational positions on work and economic life.
- * Overview of Catholic Social Teaching on work and labor
- * Presentations by low-wage workers about their struggles for justice
- * Introduction to economic trends in the society.
- * Social analysis and action planning tools for congregations.
- * Presentation by a Chicago labor leader.

Methodology:

This course follows an adult learner model. The participants are expected to take responsibility for learning by reading, reflecting on experience, inquiring, writing, working together, organizing and participating in actions. The teachers will provide frameworks and resources to assist you.

Requirements:

The class is structured for student participation and leadership. Consequently, regular attendance and active participation is expected. During the course, you will be expected to:

*Interview 5 low-wage workers, type up a summary of each interview. One page per interview. Summarize the interview then describe one thing you learned from the interview that will be helpful for ministry. Due Friday, January 28.

*Make a presentation the last day of class theologically reflecting on worker interviews and/or worker action. This presentation can take the format of but is not limited to sermon, public presentations, article for newsletter, creative art, worship materials, power point presentation. Regardless of format the material must be presented to the class. It may not simply be turned in.

* From your worker interviews write a reflection, which tells what you learned for ministry in each of the following areas: The Bible, denominational statements/positions, social analysis, and practical theology. (Each of the above areas should be between 1 – 2 pages for a total of at least ten pages.) Due Friday, January 28.

* Write a paper, which describes your Theology of Work in light of Scriptural and denominational teachings and principles. (3-5 page). Due Friday, January 28.

*Participate in at least one direct action, describe the action, and write a reflection paper that describes the action and reflects on the role of direct action in ministry. (3-5 pages)

Paper due Friday, January 28.

Academic Policies:

Each student is bound to the academic policies of her/his theological institution. However, the following is true for all of us: plagiarism will not be allowed and any infraction will lead to academic punishment. In written papers proper academic citation is required. Knowing that there are a variety of traditions, we all must use gender inclusive language when speaking of God and humanity.

Grading Policy:

Attendance and tardiness will be factored into your grade.

Any paper that is turned in late automatically loses one full grade.

- A. Outstanding work. No mistakes in written work (including spelling and grammar. Show a clear grasp of the subject, insightful analysis and conversation, and brings a creative and or new perspective or idea to the topic. Is on time and present.
- B. Good work. Solid understanding of the subject. Writing and conversation reflects knowledge. Mistakes (grammar and spelling) in written work always evident. Occasionally misses class or is tardy.
- C. Average work. Understands subject, but has difficulty presenting the material in a coherent way either in oral or written form. Written work consistently sloppy, poor grammar, weak spelling. Fails to attend class and is usually tardy.
- D. This is a failing grade. Work not turned in. Doesn't complete all required work. Misses the majority of classes and is habitually tardy. Never participates in class.

Required Readings: (Texts and Articles)

* Enrenrich, Barbara. *Nickled and Dimed*. (1st week)

* Denominational statements/resources on work for the student's particular tradition. (2nd week)

* Sample, Tex. "Doing Ministry with Working Class Whites." *Currents in Theology and Mission* Vol. 28. No. 2. (2nd week)

* Why Unions Matter (an 8-page background on unions provided by the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice) (2nd week)

- * Quigley, William. *Ending Poverty as we know it.* (3rd week)
- * Class handouts
- * Bring Bibles to Class

Selected Reading and Resources (each student reads one of his/her choice)

- * Blank, Rebecca. *It Takes a Nation.*
- * *Blue Collar Jesus*
- * Bobo, Kendall and Max. *Organizing for Social Change.* (the chapters on power and strategy)
- * Brubaker, Pamela and Mary Hobgood, eds. *Welfare Policy: Feminist Critiques* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1999.).
- * *By the River I Stand.* (Movie)
- * Daly and Cobb. *For the Common Good.*
- * Friere, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.*
- * Martin, Joan. *More Than Chains and Toil: A Christian Work Ethic of Enslaved Women.*
- * Marx, Karl. *Capital*, Volume I.
- * Meeks, Doug. *God the Economist.*
- * Norma Rae. (Movie)
- * Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation.* (New York: Perennial, 2002)
- * Stackhouse, Max. *On Moral Business: Classical and Contemporary Resources for Ethics in Economic Life.*
- * U.S. Catholic Bishops. *Economic Justice for All.*
- * Yoder, John Howard. *The Politics of Jesus.*

15 minute devotional will be had each morning, please sign up to lead devotions once.

Schedule of Topics: Assigned Readings

- Jan. 3: Scriptures and Work – Kazi Joshua
- Jan. 4: Theologies of Work (Includes Denominational Segment) – Richard Perry
Denominational Statements
- Jan. 5: Faithful Economics – Kim Bobo
Enrenrich *Nickled and Dimed*, Introduction and chapter 1
- Jan. 6: Organizing and Social Analysis – Kim Bobo
Enrenrich, *Nickeled and Dimed*, chapters 2
- Jan. 7: Religion and Labor History – Mark Wendorf
Enrenrich, *Nickeled and Dimed*, chapter 3 and evaluation

Break Week

Read - Ending Poverty as we know it, William Quigley

Continue Interviews with low-wage workers

- Jan. 17 MLK Day: NO CLASS
- Jan. 18: Action-Reflection: Thinking Like an Organizer
Ms. Katherine Bissell, Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues
Ms. Jennifer Barger, Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues
NICWJ, *Why Unions Matter*
- Jan. 19: In the Trenches: Workers, Labor Leaders and Clergy
Guest Speakers: Mike Perry, Rev. Ana Kari-Johnson, Father Mike Herman,
Rev. Jean Darling, Rev. Lilian Daniel
Ms. Katherine Bissell, Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues
Ms. Jennifer Barger, Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues
Quigley, *Ending Poverty as we know it.*

Jan. 20: Ministry with Workers – Mark Wendorf
Sample, Tex. “Doing Ministry with Working Class Whites.”

Jan. 21: Class Presentation and Worker Theology – Kazi Joshua
Wrap-up/Next Steps